

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Kalinowski Supports Privacy of State Income Tax Information



State Rep. Raymond C. Kalinowski, R-100th, Middletown, Middlefield, Durham, strongly objected to having taxpayers' individual income tax returns to be made available to a state legislative committee. The House majority, however, defeated a proposal to consider the issue of taxpayer privacy.

The matter arose after the legislature's Program Review and Investigations Committee requested millions of individual and corporate tax returns in order to formulate new state tax policy.

Rep. Kalinowski said, "Once legislators, staff and outside consultants have access to people's tax returns, anything can happen intentionally or unintentionally. Private taxpayer information could easily fall into the wrong hands or be improperly disclosed."

House Speaker James Amann and Majority Leader Christopher Donovan, in a letter to Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, asked if the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services (DRS) must provide the legislature's Program Review and Investigations Committee access to all tax records for a study of state tax policy due by December 31. Blumenthal said access was permitted.

Rep. Kalinowski and Republican colleagues proposed that the legislature, now meeting in special session, take up the privacy issue and adopt legislation prohibiting tax officials from releasing personal tax information to the committee. Majority Democrats opposed the idea.

"Legislators can do their job of studying tax policy by examining existing data," said Rep. Kalinowski. "Individual taxpayer identifying information should never be released to legislators and staff. Taxpayers expect that their personal tax information will be kept confidential -- not rummaged through by state lawmakers."